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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

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SUBJECT: "COTTAGE CHEESE IN WARTIME SUMMER MEALS" INFORMATION from dairy scientists and home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Call it Dutch...call it cottage...call it bakers'...call it pot...call it curds...or call it by the Pennsylvania Dutch name smearcase...whatever you call it, it's a good cheese for your meals this wartime summer. It's a good cheese for dinner and supper as well as for the lunch box.

One reason for using cottage cheese this summer is that it can pinch-hit for meat as a main dish at meals. Meat and cottage cheese certainly don't look or taste alike. In fact, you could hardly find two foods that seem more unlike. Cottage cheese--white, soft, delicate, bland in flavor--you would say had no resemblance to meat. But you can't judge food value by looks and taste alone. Actually, cottage cheese is enough like meat in food value to pinch-hit for it in meals. Cottage cheese and meat are most like in protein or body-building material. They differ somewhat in minerals. Cottage cheese has more calcium than meat. Meat has more iron. But because of the protein both these foods contain, nutrition scientists say that as you eat less meat, you may well eat more cottage cheese.

Of course, to get the same food value you have to use the same size serving of cheese as of meat...a pound of cheese for a pound of meat, for example. You can't expect a little dab of cheese on a lettuce leaf to give the same value as a big serving of steak. But, weight for weight, cottage cheese and meat balance each other well enough so you can plan meals that way.

Still another reason for using cottage cheese in summer meals is that it is such good hot-weather food. You can use it in cold dishes so well. What's

more, cottage cheese doesn't take much time to fix and serve. Even when you use it in a cooked dish, it never takes much cooking.

But perhaps the best reason for using cottage cheese this summer is that it saves milk that might otherwise go to waste. From Grandmother's day down through the years thrifty women, have used the extra skim milk to make cottage cheese for the family. You can make it of freshly soured "clabbered" milk.... milk that has turned sour suddenly and you want to make use of. Or you can use sweet skim milk, and then clabber it by setting it where the temperature is about 70 degrees. One gallon of skim milk will make about a pound and a half of cottage cheese.

Briefly, here's the old-fashioned way of making cottage cheese at home. First, set a pan of milk where the temperature is about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. (This time of year set milk in the cellar to get this temperature.) Ordinarily, milk takes about 30 hours to become thick and just sour enough. But you can hurry it by adding a little buttermilk or freshly sour milk as a starter. Pasteurized milk especially needs a started to hasten the souring.

Now as soon as the milk is thickened, cut it in pieces 2 inch square. Then, stir it thoroughly with a spoon. Now heat the milk to make it separate into curds and ~~whey~~, and to give the cheese a firm texture. Set the pan of clabbered milk in hot water until the milk becomes just lukewarm. Keep it warm this way for about half an hour, stirring gently with a spoon. Take care not to overheat it. That makes the cheese tough.

Now pour the warm curds and whey in a cheesecloth bag and drain until the whey stops flowing in a steady stream. Empty the curd from the bag into a bowl... work it with a spoon to the consistency of mashed potatoes...add sour or sweet cream to make it smooth...season with salt to taste.

Of course, you can buy delicious Dutch cheese. But cheese you make yourself to save milk is sure of being ration-free. And you don't need to bother

about red stamps or counting points.

Now for some good dishes to make of cottage cheese, as suggested by home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

First, some main dishes. A good cold dish is cottage cheese balls. Mix 2 cups of cottage cheese with three-fourths teaspoon of salt, a dash of pepper, 2 tablespoons mayonnaise, a few drops of onion juice. Form the mixture into balls and roll the balls in chopped parsley from your garden. Serve the cheese balls on crisp lettuce with halves of hard-cooked eggs and manonnaise.

Cottage cheese, mixed with salt, pepper, onion juice and chopped nuts, makes a good filling for scooped out tomatoes or halves of green peppers.

Here's an idea for a quick hot dish: Cook a little diced salt pork until crisp. Then chop it and mix it with cottage cheese. Season the cheese with salt and pepper...spread on hot toast. Serve with a hot, well-seasoned tomato sauce.

You can use cottage cheese in an omelet, too. Mix bits of crisped bacon with the cheese. Make a plain omelet. Spread the cheese on the omelet when the omelet is just cooked enough to fold.

An easy and delicious summertime dessert you make with cottage cheese and cherry preserves. Mix cherry preserves and a little cream and sugar into cottage cheese. Mold and chill. Serve garnished with cherries, preserved or fresh.

But perhaps the most famous and favorite of all the good things you can make with cottage cheese is old-fashioned cheese pie. (It takes only a third of a cup of sugar for a good-sized pie, too.) Here's what the recipe calls for: 1 pound cottage cheese...one-fourth cup milk...one-third cup sugar...one-half teaspoon salt...one-half cup chopped raisins (other chopped dried fruit)...3 eggs beaten...2 tablespoons melted fat...grated rind and juice of 1 lemon....pie crust.

Make the pie like this: Bake the crust in a deep pan until a delicate brown. While it's baking, press the cheese through a fine sieve. Add first the milk.... then the sugar and salt...then the raisins or other dried fruit...beaten eggs.... melted fat....lemon juice and grated rind. Stir until well-mixed. Fill the baked crust with this. Bake in a moderate oven until firm in the center...about 15 or 20 minutes.

That's all about cottage cheese today except a reminder that it's not rationed...it can pinch-hit for meat...it's a good food for all ages...you can make it at home or buy it...it makes delicious summer main dishes, salads, sandwiches and desserts.

